

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 HEW-04 MED-02 OES-07

IO-13 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 /064 W

-----017566 220804Z /11

P R 211445Z JUN 78

FM AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7164

INFO AMCONSUL BUKAVU POUCH

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY KIGALI

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BUJUMBURA 0703

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID, PEDR, SWEL, TBIO, BY

SUBJ: FOLLOW UP OF BURUNDI REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE AGAINST CHOLERA  
THREAT

REF: BUJUMBURA 694

SUMMARY: CONSULTATION AMONG BELGIAN, WEST GERMAN AND  
U.S. AMBASSADORS, FRENCH CHARGE, ACTING FED REP AND  
BELGIAN MEDICAL OFFICER EVENING JUNE 20 MET TO CONSIDER  
RECOMMENDATIONS FOLLOWING UP ON BURUNDI APPEAL FOR HELP  
AGAINST CHOLERA THREAT. INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO  
BELGIANS WHO HAVE DOCTORS IN BOTH ZAIRE AND BURUNDI  
INDICATED ORIGINAL INTRODUCTION OF CHOLERA FROM TANZANIA  
HAD BEEN CURTAILED BUT DISEASE HAD BEEN REINTRODUCED TO  
AREA NORTH OF BUJUMBURA FROM ZAIRE'S KIVU PROVINCE WHERE  
THERE HAD BEEN MANY DEATHS AND WHERE EPIDEMIC WAS SPREADING.  
IT WAS ALSO SPREADING IN IMBO AREA IN BURUNDI NORTH OF  
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BUJUMBURA. DOCTORS THOUGHT REASONABLE ESTIMATE OF EMERTENCY  
LIKELY CONFRONT BUJUMBURA IN NEAR FUTURE WAS 1000 CASES. BELGIAN  
ESTIMATES FOR MEDICATIONS, DISINFECTANTS AND INSECTICIDES  
NEEDED TO HANDLE FOUR THOUSAND CASES WERE DIVIDED BY FOUR AND AGAIN  
DIVIDED BY FOUR TO REACH ESTIMATE OF POSSIBLE CONTRIBUTIONS BY  
FOUR COUNTRIES. THIS MESSAGE RECOMMENDS U.S. CONTRIBUTION  
OF THIS SIZE IN PREPARATION FOR POSSIBLE QUICK DEVELOPMENT OF

DISASTER, INQUIRES ABOUT FUNDING FOR PROCUREMENT AND EXPRESSES  
READINESS MAKE DETERMINATION UNDER 2 FAM 062 IF DISASTER  
ACTUALLY DEVELOPS. END SUMMARY.

1. U.S. AND BELGIAN AMBASSADORS PLUS FRENCH CHARGE, ACTING FEDREP,  
BELGIAN PHYSICIAN TOURNOY, A SECOND BELGIAN PHYSICIAN AND A BELGIAN  
PHARMACIST MET EVENING JUNE 20 FOR DISCUSSION FOLLOWING UP REFTTEL.

2. BELGIAN AMBASSADOR SUMMARIZED HIS RECENT INFORMATION ON CHOLERA  
IN ZAIRE ADJACENT TO BURUNDI AS FOLLOWS:

A. THE ALMOST EXPONENTIAL INCREASE IN DEATHS FROM CHOLERA  
RECORDED AT THE BEGINNING OF JULY IN UVIRA AND RUNINGO WAS HALTED  
THANKS TO MEASURES AND TREATMENT MADE POSSIBLE BY CURRENTLY AVAILABLE  
ANTI-CHOLERA VACCINE, MEDICATIONS AND SERUMS. AT RUNINGO THE SITUATION

NO LONGER SEEMED TO BE WORSENING. AT THE UVIRA HOSPITAL MANY CASES  
OF CHOLERA ADMITTED NOW STABILIZED AND CURES WERE NUMEROUS  
(90 PERCENT). THE THREE DOUBTFUL CASES ADMITTED TO THE GENERAL  
HOSPITAL AT BUKAVU ABOUT JUNE 10 WERE CLINICALLY CURED.

B. IF THE SITUATION SEEMED TO BE STABILIZED AT UVIRA AND  
RUNINGO THE EPIDEMIC NEVERTHELESS CONTINUED TO SPREAD. THERE ARE  
NOW MANY CASES OF CHOLERA AT RUMIKA ND AT NDUNDA. CASES ARE ALSO  
REPORTED AT KILIBA AND LUVUNGI. IT IS CONFIRMED THAT THE EPIDEMIC  
HAS REACHED THE BUKAVU REGION. JUNE 18 THERE WERE THREE CLINICALLY  
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CERTAIN CASES OF CHOLERA AT THE FORMULAC HOSPITAL IN KATANA.

C. ACCORDING TO RELIABLE SOURCES THE NUMBER OF DEATHS DUE TO  
CHOLERA HAS REACHED:

- (1) UVIRA: ABOUT 100
- (2) RUNINGO: ABOUT 250
- (3) RUMIKA: 33
- (4) KILIBA: 2
- (5) LUVUNGI: 1

D. IN CENTERS LIKE UVIRA THE PERCENTAGE OF CURES OF CASES  
ADMITTED TO HOSPITAL IS VERY HIGH (90 PERCENT). IN SMALL VILLAGES  
WITH NO SANITARY INFRASTRUCTURE THERE HAVE BEEN A GREAT MANY DEATHS.

3. BELGIAN DR. TOURNOY SKETCHED NATURE AND PROSPECTS OF EPIDEMIC IN  
BURUNDI AS FOLLOWS:

A. FIRST CASES IN BURUNDI APPEARED AT RUMONGE INTRODUCED FROM  
TANZANIA VIA KIGOMA. THERE WERE NO CASES IN KIGOMA TOWN BUT  
THERE WERE CASES IN "SWAHILI" VILLAGES NEARBY WHICH DID NOT HAVE  
WATER SUPPLY. DEVELOPMENT AT RUMONGE WAS DRAMATIC RESULTING FROM

INFECTED WATER SUPPLY. CONCRETE COVER OF ONE OF THREE OLD CISTERNS WAS BROKEN AND WOMEN USED IT FOR WASHING INCLUDING LAUNDRY OF CHOLERA CASES. FORTUNATELY AN ITALIAN DOCTOR IN THE AREA TOOK CHARGE AND ONLY THREE DEATHS RESULTED. POPULATION WAS BLOCKADED AND EPIDEMIC DID NOT SPREAD.

B. IN IMBO PLATEAU IN NORTHWEST BURUNDI POPULATION SEPARATED FROM NORMAL WATER SUPPLY IN FARMING OPERATION USED WATER FROM RICE FIELDS. SHOULD CHOLERA BECOME ESTABLISHED IN IMBO PLAIN IT WILL CONTINUE THERE INDEFINITELY. CASES BEGAN TO ARRIVE FROM ZAIRE SEEKING TREATMENT. ONE COURAGEOUS OR AVARICIOUS TAXI DRIVER DROVE ONE CASE TO BUJUMBURA HOSPITAL. TAXI DRIVER HAS BEEN JAILED.

C. THERE ARE MANY POORLY TREATED CASES IN UVIRA. AN ISOLATION  
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STATION HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED AT KATUMBA, THE FRONTIER POST BETWEEN UVIRA AND BUJUMBURA, ADMITTING 10 TO 20 CASES PER DAY FOR 4 TO 5 DAYS TREATMENT.

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 HEW-04 MED-02 OES-07  
IO-13 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 /064 W  
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P R 211445Z JUN 78  
FM AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7165  
INFO AMCONSUL BUKAVU POUCH  
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AMEMBASSY NAIROBI  
AMEMBASSY PARIS

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D. HOWEVER, THE REST OF THE FRONTIER IS NOT CLOSED. LAST WEEK SEVERAL CASES WERE FOUND ON THE ROAD FROM CIBITOKI AMONG PEOPLE WHO HAVE HAD CONTACT WITH ZAIRE. THIS SITUATION IS GETTING WORSE. THERE ARE NOW CASES ON THE PHSDUZH BUBANZA WITHIN 12 KILOMETERS IN THE DIRECTION OF BUBANZA FROM BUJUMBURA AND AT TEA PLANTATION OF KIVOGA ON THE IMBO ROAD. THIS SITUATION IS NOT DRAMATIC BECAUSE THE CAUSATIVE ORGANISM IS RELATIVELY BENIGN. FOUR TO FIVE DAYS TREATMENT SUFFICE TO CURE THE DISEASE.

E. THIS CHOLERA EPIDEMIC IS A COMPLETELY NEW PHENOMENON IN AFRICA. TWENTY YEARS AGO THE EL TOR STRAIN WAS FOUND ONLY IN EGYPT. IT SPREAD THROUGH KENYA FROM OASIS TO OASIS. THERE WERE MANY CASES IN TANZANIA BUT THE AUTHORITIES FAILED TO REPORT THEM FOR FROM 7 TO 9 MONTHS FOR FEAR OF HURTING THE TOURIST TRADE.

F. THE TYPE INTRODUCED AT KALEMIE HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED AS THE SAME TYPE NOW IN THE BUJUMBURA AREA. IT IS EL TOR TYPE OGINAWA. AN UNKNOWN FACTOR IS JUST WHAT THE SITUATION IS ALONG THE CONFIDENTIAL

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TANZANIA BORDER.

G. THERE IS A CONSTANT THREAT OF INTRODUCTION OF CHOLERA FROM ZAIRE WHICH MAY LAST ONE OR TWO YEARS.

H. A SANITARY WATER SUPPLY FOR EACH VILLAGE IS THE LONG TERM SOLUTION. A LARGE QUANTITY OF MEDICATIONS WILL HELP IN THE SHORT RUN. CHOLERA VACCINE SHOTS ARE USELESS EXCEPT TO PERMIT PEOPLE TO TRAVEL INTERNATIONALLY.

I. THE MOST USEFUL STEP WHICH COULD BE TAKEN IN BUJUMBURA WOULD BE THE INSTALLATION OF A FACTORY TO MAKE PERFUSION KITS FOR ADMINISTRATION OF SALINE AND GLUCOSE SOLUTIONS. PLASTIC BOTTLES, SALT AND BAKING POWDER WOULD BE ALL THAT WAS NEEDED.

4. THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE DISCUSSION ABOUT THE RELATIVE ADVANTAGES IMPROVING PERFUSION KITS, SOLUTIONS AND MEDICATIONS OR CONSTRUCTING A FACTORY (WHICH THE BELGIANS HAVE ALREADY PLANNED) TO MAKE THESE PRODUCTS LOCALLY.

5. I EXPRESSED OPINION THAT CONSTRUCTING FACTORY WAS HARDLY A RESPONSE TO AN URGENT APPEAL FOR EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE IN MEETING WHAT I GATHERED FROM FOREGOING WAS A REAL AND PRESENT DANGER. PROVIDING FOR FUTURE PHARMACEUTICAL REQUIREMENTS WAS A SEPARATE PROBLEM.

6. IT WAS GENERAL CONSENSUS THAT IN RESPONSE TO IMMEDIATE PROBLEM EACH EMBASSY REPRESENTED (U.S., BELGIUM, FRANCE, GERMANY) WOULD RECOMMEND EMERGENCY PROVISION OF ONE FOURTH OR ONE FIFTH OF A LIST OF PRODUCTS DRAWN UP BY THE BELGIAN PHARMACIST FOR HANDLING

FOUR THOUSAND CHOLERA CASES. COMBINED CONTRIBUTIONS, IF FORTH-COMING, WOULD ADD UP TO ENOUGH TO HANDLE 1,000 CASES WHICH DOCTORS CONSIDERED A REASONABLE ESTIMATE OF EMERGENCY LIKELY TO CONFRONT  
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BUJUMBURA IN NEAR FUTURE.

7. A U.S. CONTRIBUTION BASED ON THIS RATIONALE WOULD IN ROUND FIGURES COME TO:

MEDICATIONS:

PHYSIOLOGICAL PERFUSION SOLUTIONS: 1500 LITERS  
GLUCOSE PERFUSION SOLUTIONS: 1500 LITERS  
FANASIL 500 MG.: 10,000 TABLETS  
CHLORAMPHENICOL 250 MG.: JSJN710##CAPSULES  
OXYTETRACYCLINE CLORH 250 MG.: 35,000 CAPSULES

DISINFECTANTS AND INSECTICIDES:

CREOLINE: 1,600 LITERS  
HYPOCHLORIDE CALCIQUE (70 PCNT) 190 KILOGRAMS  
NEXION (40 PCNT) 1,000 LITERS

8. RECOMMENDATION: ALTHOUGH AS OF NOW A DISASTER SITUATION DOES NOT ACTUALLY EXIST IN BURUNDI FROM THE CHOLERA EPIDEMIC THAT IS PREVALENT IN KIVU AND PENETRATING THE AREA NORTH OF BUJUMBURA SUCH A SITUATION COULD DEVELOP VERY QUICKLY. IN ORDER TO PREPARE FOR IT RECOMMEND DEPARTMENT ADVISE WHAT, IF ANY, FUNDS MAY BE USED IMMEDIATELY FOR PROCUREMENT OF SOME OR ALL OF THE COMPONENTS OF A U.S. CONTRIBUTION DESCRIBED IN PARA 7 ABOVE. IF DISASTER ACTUALLY DEVELOPS I WILL OF COURSE MAKE DETERMINATION UNDER 2FAM 062.  
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NOTE BY OC/T: ##AS RECEIVED.

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## Message Attributes

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**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
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**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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